

MEMORANDUM

1 SEPTEMBER 1994

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND
MARISA LAGO, DIRECTOR

FROM: BRIAN DeLOREY, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: MINOR MODIFICATION OF THE PARK PLAZA URBAN RENEWAL
PLAN

PLASS CD 5-0

SUMMARY: THIS MEMORANDUM REQUESTS THAT THE BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (BRA) ADOPT A MINOR MODIFICATION TO THE PARK PLAZA URBAN RENEWAL PLAN ALLOWING FOR A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT IN THE PARK PLAZA URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT AREA AND THAT THE BRA AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR TO PROCLAIM BY CERTIFICATE THIS MINOR MODIFICATION.

The Park Plaza Urban Renewal Plan, which was adopted by the Authority on December 16, 1971 and amended in May of 1977 and November 1981, sets forth certain goals for the redevelopment of the Park Plaza area of Boston. The Park Plaza Urban Renewal Area is bounded by Boylston, Essex, Arlington, Stuart, and Kneeland Streets and Harrison Avenue and encompasses 35 acres of land. The goals of the Plan included providing higher economic use for the under-utilized parcels, eliminating blighted conditions, increasing property tax revenue through more intensive development, promoting development which provided a mix of appropriate uses and the design of buildings complimentary in size, configuration and materials to the nearby historic neighborhoods.

To accomplish the goals of the Plan it is recommended that a demonstration project be undertaken within the Project Area. The demonstration project site is the Royal Hotel located at 640-644 Washington Street. The building has been vacant for over a year and its appearance and condition contributes to the blighted circumstances of Parcel 5, also known as Parcel E in the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Area. Located next to the Boston Landmark Liberty Tree building, 640-644 Washington Street is included in the National Register District as a contributing building. The goal of the demonstration project would be to preserve and rehabilitate this blighted and deteriorated structure consistent with controls and restrictions found in the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Plan. It is unlikely that at this time that private enterprise could accomplish the efforts and actions necessary for the fulfillment of the Plan. It is not anticipated that relocation efforts will be necessary as part of the demonstration project, as the building is vacant.

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A minor plan change in Section A in November 1981 amended the Plan, deleting a precondition to the acquisition of Parcel D (4) and E (5) of the Plan Area. The precondition had originally established a three year deadline for selection of developers for Parcels D and E. With the removal of the precondition, the BRA is able to acquire the Royal Hotel which is located in Parcel E.

The demonstration project evidences the BRA's consistent commitment to the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Plan. To effectuate the commitment it is necessary that a minor modification be adopted. This minor modification shall take the form of inserting in Section D.2. of the Plan the following modifying language at the end of the paragraph, "Notwithstanding the aforementioned, the Boston Redevelopment Authority may acquire the property located at 640-644 Washington Street, Boston, Massachusetts, with financing provided by City Capital, as a demonstration project within the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Area necessary to and consistent with the controls and restrictions of this Urban Renewal Plan."

Appropriate votes follow:

VOTED: That the Boston Redevelopment Authority hereby determines that the Royal Hotel, located at 640-644 Washington Street, Boston, Massachusetts, is blighted and substandard and approves its acquisition and preservation as a demonstration project within the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Area; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Boston Redevelopment Authority hereby adopts the attached resolution modifying the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Plan and authorizes the Director to proclaim the modification.

RESOLUTION OF THE BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

RE: MODIFICATION TO THE URBAN RENEWAL PLAN OF THE PARK PLAZA URBAN RENEWAL AREA AND AUTHORIZATION TO PROCLAIM BY CERTIFICATE THIS MINOR MODIFICATION

WHEREAS, the Urban Renewal Plan for the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Area was adopted by the Boston Redevelopment Authority on July 15, 1971 and submitted to the Boston City Council thereafter; and

WHEREAS, the Boston City Council approved the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Plan with certain changes by Vote of December 6, 1971; and

WHEREAS, the Boston Redevelopment Authority by Vote of December 16, 1971 accepted and effected certain changes voted by the City Council in approving the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Plan on December 6, 1971; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor of the City of Boston approved the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Plan, as previously approved by the City Council and the Boston Redevelopment Authority, on December 22, 1971; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Community Affairs approved the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Plan; and

WHEREAS, Section F.1 of said Plan entitled "Plan Modification or Amendment" provides that the Plan may be adjusted in minor ways from time to time by the Authority; and

WHEREAS, Section D.2 of said Plan sets forth the conditions for Stage II acquisition; and

WHEREAS, the Boston Redevelopment Authority determined that the property located at 640-644 Washington Street, Boston, Massachusetts is blighted and substandard; and

WHEREAS, the Boston Redevelopment Authority is cognizant of Chapter 781 of the Acts and Resolves of 1972 with respect to minimizing and preventing damage to the environment; and

WHEREAS, the Boston Redevelopment Authority determined that the proposed acquisition and preservation of the property located at 640-644 Washington Street, Boston, Massachusetts would not result in significant damage to or impairment of the environment and was consistent with the purposes of said Plan; and

WHEREAS, it is the opinion of the Boston Redevelopment Authority that a minor modification of the Plan with respect to the property located at 640-644 Washington Street, Boston, Massachusetts is consistent with the objectives of the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Plan; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment to the Plan is a minor modification and may be adopted within the discretion of the Boston Redevelopment Authority pursuant to Section F-1;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY:

1. That Section D.2 is hereby modified by adding at the end thereof the following sentence:

"Notwithstanding the aforementioned, the Boston Redevelopment Authority may acquire the property located at 640-644 Washington Street, Boston, Massachusetts, with financing provided by City Capital, as a demonstration project within the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Area necessary to and consistent with the controls and restrictions of this Urban Renewal Plan."

and

2. That the proposed modification is found to be a minor modification which does not substantially or materially alter or change the Plan; and

3. That all other provisions of the Plan not inconsistent herewith are continued in full force and effect; and

4. That it is hereby found and determined that the proposed acquisition and preservation of the property located at 640-644 Washington Street, Boston, Massachusetts will not result in significant damage to or impairment of the environment and further, that all practicable and feasible means and measures have been taken and are being utilized to avoid and minimize damage to the environment; and

5. That the Director, be and hereby is, authorized to proclaim by certificate this modification of the Plan, all in accordance with the provisions of the Urban Renewal Handbook, RHM 7207.1 dated August, 1974.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF COMMUNITIES & DEVELOPMENT



William F. Weld, Governor
Argeo Paul Cellucci, Lt. Governor
Mary L. Padula, Cabinet Secretary

Ms. Marisa Lago, Director
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston MA 02201

Re: Park Plaza Urban Renewal Plan Change

Dear Ms. Lago:

We have reviewed your request for a Plan change to the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Plan. The proposed change will allow for the acquisition of the property located at 640-644 Washington Street, to be acquired and rehabilitated by the Boston Redevelopment Authority as a demonstration project for retail and residential mixed use.

This office has determined that the proposed amendment is a Minor Plan change and that the materials submitted in support of the amendment satisfy the requirements of EOCD's regulations concerning such requests (760 CMR 13.04) and the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Plan. This plan change is limited to this parcel.

I am pleased to inform you that this office approves the Plan Change to the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Project as submitted.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mary L. Padula", written over a horizontal line.

Mary L. Padula
Cabinet Secretary

s:wp\BPP.Mpc

ADOPTED 9/11/94
Doc. NO 5656

